

RHODORA NEWS & NOTES

LISA A. STANDLEY

HIGHLIGHTS OF CLUB MEETINGS

November 1995 (913th Meeting). Seven Club members shared slides and information at the “Annual Exchange of Botanical Explorations and Exploits,” AKA Show & Tell. Pam Weatherbee spent much of her summer conducting a floristic survey of a 1000-acre parcel on Mt. Greylock. Pam reported finding an unusually high frequency of *Botrychium matricariaefolium*, and new sites for *Galium boreale* and *Carex baileyi*. Leila Schultz offered a look at rare plant hunting in Utah, where rugged terrain and isolated mountain ranges provide spectacular scenery as well as challenges to the botanist. Her summer’s work succeeded in relocating a population of the rare endemic *Thelypodopsis argillacea*, a delicate pink-flowered mustard, on gypsum outcrops in eastern Oregon. Barre Hellquist spent a month in Australia looking at aquatic plants. Wetlands containing as many as six species of waterlilies were the high point of the trip.

Matt Hickler noted the effects of the 1995 drought on oxbow ponds along the Nashua River at Fort Devens. During the drought, the aquatic vegetation in these ponds was still present and even healthy, but drastically different from normal growth forms. *Potamogeton natans* formed tight appressed rosettes, while *Nymphaea* produced erect leaves on robust petioles. Rare species, like *Panicum philadelphicum*, appeared in abundance on exposed mud flats.

George Newman reviewed the June Club Field Trip to Mt. Washington’s Alpine Gardens, attended by 23 people. Ten hardy souls braved the gale winds and continued on to the headwall of the Great Gulf. Highlights included *Loiseleuria*, *Rhododendron lapponicum*, *Phyllodoce* and *Cassiope*; people who left early missed seeing *Cardamine bellidifolia* and *Saxifraga rivularis*. In September, George returned to the Presidentials to search for the distinctive bright red leaves of *Arctostaphylos alpina*. On a later trip to Newfoundland, George saw thousands of individuals of *Aretusa* in bloom and located a large population of a form of *Sarracenia* that lacks anthocyanin.

Art Gilman provided a survey of the diversity of club moss species and hybrids in northern Vermont, where it is possible to find *Diphasiastrum tristachyum*, *D. digitatum*, and their hybrid

(*D. × habereri*), as well as *Diphasiastrum × zeilleri* and its parents (*D. tristachyum* and *D. complanatum*). Abandoned high pastures are habitats for *Diphasiastrum × sabinifolium* (*tristachyum × sitchense*), and a newly described hybrid of *D. sabinifolium* and *D. digitatum*.

December 1995 (914th meeting). Dr. Norton Nickerson of Tufts University spoke on "A Look at New Zealand Mangrove Ecosystems Over Time." New Zealand has but a single species of mangrove, *Avicennia resinifera*, the world's southernmost mangrove. The epithet was chosen because early collectors found floating lumps of *Agathis* resin in mangrove swamps. Mangroves have an important ecological role as the tropical equivalent of salt marshes, but are often threatened by grazing, cutting, and filling.

Much of the talk focused on mangrove swamps in embayments near the tip of New Zealand's North Cape. Although a national park, sheep and cattle are grazed on the uplands. Where the hills bordering mangrove swamps are heavily grazed, sediment deposition buries pneumatophores and kills the mangroves. Animals also wander onto the tidal flats at low tide and damage the mangroves by grazing. In the late 1970's, mangroves had been virtually eliminated in this area, and the local fishermen complained about declines in shellfish and fisheries.

Recommendations that a buffer strip of Crown lands along the edge of the estuary be protected were implemented by the local authorities. In the absence of grazing, shrubs and a dense vegetation had become established in this "buffer strip," and trees had been planted in some areas to restore vegetation to overgrazed areas. Consequences were dramatic—mangrove swamps recovered and became re-established in areas where they had practically disappeared. Mangroves have also colonized and replaced stands of the introduced *Spartina anglica*, indicating that the salt marsh grass may be acting as the first successional stage in the establishment of mangroves.

THE GRAY HERBARIUM CARD INDEX OF NEW
WORLD PLANTS AND THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY
HERBARIA TYPE SPECIMEN
COLLECTION DATABASE

The Gray Herbarium Card Index and the Harvard University Herbaria Type Collection databases are now available on the

World Wide Web through the Harvard University Herbaria (HUH) Web page. The Universal Resource Locator (URL) for the HUH Web site is: <http://www.herbaria.harvard.edu>.

With the above URL, users will find a general outline of the Harvard University Herbaria, including "Databases," from which many searchable databases, including the Gray Herbarium Card Index, the Harvard University Herbaria Type Specimen Collections, the Farlow Diatom Collection, Botanical Collectors, and Botanical Authors can be accessed.

The Web page search form, for both the Gray Card Index and Type Collections, has multiple fields (such as Family, Genus, Specific & Infraspecific Epithets, Author, Publication, and Type). This allows users to make complex queries. Detailed instructions on searching are provided.

The Gray Herbarium Card Index provides bibliographic details for new taxa of vascular plants, new combinations, new status, and new names of New World Plants. It also includes information on infrageneric and infrafamilial names, and on types (including epi-, neo-, and lectotypification). From its inception (in 1893), the Gray Index included publication information for all specific and infraspecific names, basionyms, replaced synonyms, and other nomenclatural synonyms, but not taxonomic synonyms.

Although the original scheme of the Gray Index was designed to cover specific and infraspecific names published from 1 January 1886, it was later modified to include all infraspecific names published from 1753. An effort to include infraspecific names from this period is still underway. The information on infrageneric and infrafamilial names and types starts from the early 1970's.

The Gray Index data, which was published in the form of printed cards until the mid 1980's and as microfiche until early 1992, has been made available over the Internet using Gopher since mid-1992. (Users may find additional information on the Web page "About the Gray Herbarium Index.")

The Type Collection database includes information on type specimens in the Harvard University Herbaria (A, AMES, ECON, FH, GH, NEBC), collected from all parts of the world. The data on Type Collections has also been available on Gopher since 1991. (Presently, Internet users may access the Gray Index data and Type Collections data through either Gopher or the World Wide Web; however, at some point in the near future the Gopher services will be discontinued.)

An Appeal to the Users of the Gray Herbarium Card Index and Type Collections. The accuracy and completeness of the Gray Card Index and Type Collections databases depends largely upon the input of the users, who are urged to provide any relevant information (such as additions, omissions, and corrections to the data) via e-mail to either K. N. Gandhi (gandhi@oeb.harvard.edu) or David Boufford (boufford@oeb.harvard.edu). Contributed by K. N. Gandhi.